

Indiana Department of Correction Lends a "Helping Hand" to Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Correction Hurricane Victims

September 15, 2005

Secretary Richard L. Stalder
Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections
504 Mayflower Street
P.O. 94304
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Secretary Stalder:

From all that we have witnessed second hand, and from the first hand accounts that you have shared with me, which I have communicated to my staff, we at the Indiana Department of Correction have a clearer understanding of the immense troubles faced by you and your fine staff at the Louisiana Department of public Safety and Corrections in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Please know that the 8,400 employees that make up the Indiana Department of Correction, and even many of the 25,000 offenders they serve and supervise, are rallying to help your staff heal, regain strength, and successfully travel the long road of reconstruction that lies ahead.

As I write this letter, my Department is wire transferring 5,000 to an account that you established. Although this initial transfer is not a large amount, I can assure you that more fiscal support will be given by the staff of the Indiana DOC during the coming weeks and months. In addition to financial support, many staff donated things your displaced staff have requested; such as personal hygiene items, diapers, formula, other baby supplies, and packaged water. Some of these supplies have already been shipped with the help of Indiana's National Guard. Other supplies are being sent directly by the Department. As your agency's staff continues to assess their individual needs, know that employees at over 40 Indiana DOC facilities and programs are standing by, eager to help their Louisiana brothers and sisters in service to public safety. The goal established by the Indiana Department of Correction is to provide assistance as long as it takes for impacted staff to rebuilt their homes and reacquaint themselves and their families to a stabilized lifestyle.

To this end, please consider the Indiana Department of Correction as a partner in your plans to help address any long-term needs your staff might have. With planning, we can supply building materials, furniture, clothing and personal property. If desired and feasible, we could work more directly with families, supplying them with specific items of need, and helping insure that the coming holidays will still be a time for family joy.

My offer to temporarily house offenders in the State of Indiana stands. I have one facility that could accommodate a significant number of medium or minimum security offenders. As you review your

options, please keep this in mind. Send any questions you may have directly to my attention.

I know that you and your fine staff will repair the ruin caused by this unexpected catastrophe. As your agency engages in this monumental effort, please know that the thoughts and prayers of many of your peers across the country are with you, hoping that this test brings out the best in your staff, the inmates your agency holds, and those, like the employees of Indiana's DOC, that waits in the wings to help.

Sincerely,
J. David Donahue
Commissioner

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